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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [KWMN](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: YOUNG PUK COR MEMBER CRITICIZES SPEAKER; WARNS OF
DISENCHANTED KURDISH STREET

Classified By: Political Counselor Robert S. Ford for
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) In an April 24 meeting with PolOffs, Kurdish Alliance and new Council of Representatives (CoR) member Tania Tal'at Muhammad Gilly expressed great disappointment with new CoR Speaker Mahmoud Mashhadani's April 22 acceptance speech and his recent comments in the press. Gilly charged that Mashhadani's words demonstrated what little regard he had for the CoR and his position. She said that many members (from all political parties) were embarrassed by his conduct and are seeking ways to have him removed from office. She criticized Mashhadani for his declaration during his acceptance speech that he bribed a government official USD 16,000 to get out of jail; she characterized this act as a "crime" (COMMENT: Mashhadani's imprisonment occurred during Saddam's regime. END COMMENT) She added that there should be no criminals serving in the CoR, regardless of whether the act was justified or not. Gilly admitted that she, like many Kurds, turned in blank ballots for Mashhadani but added that they did not receive specific instructions to do so from party leaders. She said she feared that Mashhadani's "clown act" will damage the Sunnis' image and increase sectarianism within the CoR.

¶2. (C) Gilly told PolOffs that she wants to be a member of the CoR Foreign Relations and Human Rights Committees but added that this may be impossible because committee selection is decided by "ones at the top." She asserted that she has thoroughly examined the Constitution and will focus her energy on ensuring that Article 41 remains the legal basis for women's rights.

¶3. (C) Gilly warned that the Kurdish street is disenchanted with the GOI and believes that President Talabani has conceded too much on Kurdish issues in the name of national unity and peace. The long delay in forming the government has many Kurds impatient for the issue of Kirkuk to be addressed. She argued that the U.S. had the opportunity to "resolve" Kirkuk before the drafting of the constitution. PolOff argued that Iraqi political leaders agreed that resolving the issue of Kirkuk could have easily delayed constitution drafting and that the issue was mentioned in the document so that it would not be forgotten.

¶4. (C) BIONOTE: Tania Tal'at Muhammad Gilly is the youngest member of the Kurdish Alliance born on December 5, 1974 in Kuwait. There is some controversy about her PUK candidacy. According to IECI records, Gilly was added to the PUK Kirkuk list after the submission deadline and inserted at #3 in the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan ticket in Kirkuk. Her father, Talat Muhammad

Ali, also PUK member, was a Transitional National Assembly (TNA) member. Gilly was schooled in Canada and holds Canadian citizenship. Until very recently, she lived in Maryland and worked for a DC based NGO. In the fall of 2005, Gilly came to Baghdad as a consultant for the "Pledge for Iraq" women's rights campaign. She was also a participant in the "Future of Iraq" project in DC. She is married with two sons but lives with her parents in Kirkuk. She appears secular. She has an excellent command of the English language. END BIONOTE.
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